

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 ISO-00 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10
NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01
L-03 H-01 SS-15 NSC-05 /109 W
-----059808 101934Z /43

R 101844Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5418
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LOME
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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

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USEEC

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EEC, XA

SUBJECT: THIRD SESSION OF ACP/EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS,
BRUSSELS, MARCH 13-14

REF: 77 BRUSSELS 4411 (NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY: ANNUAL ACP/EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING, BRUSSELS, MARCH 13-14, WILL BE ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF EC AND ITS MEMBER STATES, ON THE ONE HAND, AND BY MINISTERS OF 53 AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC (ACP) GOVERNMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH COMMUNITY UNDER LOME CONVENTION, ON THE OTHER. AGENDA CONSISTS OF A NUMBER OF ROUTINE ITEMS (E.G., REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT; EXAMINATION OF APPLICATION OF CONVENTION IN FINANCIAL, COMMERCIAL, TRADE PROMOTION, COMMODITIES, INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND STABEX MATTERS, ETC.). HOWEVER, IN INFORMAL CONTACTS ON MARGINS OF REGULAR SESSION, MINISTERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS: (A) NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES; (B) PREPARATIONS FOR LOME II NEGOTIATIONS, TO BEGIN LATE THIS YEAR; AND (C) INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION, INCLUDING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER. END SUMMARY.

2. ARTICLE 72 OF LOME CONVENTION SPECIFIES THAT ACP/EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEET ANNUALLY AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. THIS YEAR'S MEETING, MARCH 13-14 IN BRUSSELS, WILL BE CO-CHAIRLED BY DENMARK'S MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, L. OSTERGAARD AND JAMAICAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, P.J.PATTERSON. IN ADDITION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EC

AND THE NINE MEMBER STATES, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE 53
ACP STATES ON THE OTHER, DELEGATIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING
ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE PRESENT AS OBSERVERS: CARICOM,
ECOWAS, WEST AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, CENTRAL
AFRICAN CUSTOMS AND ECONOMIC UNION, AND COMMON AFRICAN
AND MAURITIAN ORGANIZATION.

3. EC COMMISSION AND EC COUNCIL SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS
TELL US THEY EXPECT FEW IMPORTANT SUBSTANTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS
AT THIS MEETING SINCE SEVERAL IMPORTANT DOSSIERS, INCLUD-
ING THE RENEWAL OF THE LOME CONVENTION (WHICH EXPIRES IN
MARCH 1980), ARE NOT YET RIPE FOR FORMAL DISCUSSION. HENCE,
MINISTERIAL SESSION AMOUNTS TO A DAMAGE-LIMITING EXERCISE
FROM COMMUNITY'S STANDPOINT. ON ACP SIDE, WE ARE TOLD,
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SEVERAL AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES WILL WANT TO AIR
DISAGREEMENT WITH EC ON LATTER'S TREATMENT UNDER LOME
CONVENTION OF SPECIFIC COMMODITY ISSUES (SUCH AS BANANAS,

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-----077084 111656Z /53

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T (P A R A 5 . S U B - P A R A (B))
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SUGAR, RUM, ETC.) WITH A VIEW TO REMEDYING WHAT THEY
PERCEIVE TO BE DEFECTS IN CONVENTION PROTOCOLS ON THESE
PRODUCTS. BARRING UNFORESEEABLE CHANGES IN PREPARED

SCENARIO FOR MEETING (AGREED BY BOTH SIDES DURING NEGOTIATIONS IN BRUSSELS AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL IN RECENT WEEKS), FINAL RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS ON FORMAL AGENDA SHOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A JOINT COMMUNIQUE COVERING VARIOUS FIELDS OF LOME CONVENTION ACTIVITY (FINANCIAL COOPERATION, TRADE PROMOTION, INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION, STABEX, ETCM) REVIEWED BY MINISTERS.

4. GIVEN FOREGOING PROGNOSIS, AND IN LIGHT OF DISSATISFACTION ON BOTH SIDES WITH ORGANIZATION OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING IN SUVA (REFTEL), CERTAIN STEPS ARE PLANNED TO "ENLIVEN" THE PROCEEDINGS BY PERMITTING MINISTERS TO CONSIDER, INFORMALLY AND OFF THE RECORD, THREE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST. THESE ARE:

--NORTH/SOUTH MATTERS, INCLUDING DEBT RELIEF, COMMODITIES AND COMMON FUND NEGOTIATIONS;

--OUTLOOK FOR RENEGOTIATION OF LOME CONVENTION TO BEGIN LATE THIS YEAR; AND

--INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY.

A FOURTH ITEM--SOUTH AFRICA--SUGGESTED BY ACP SECRETARIAT, HAS BEEN REJECTED BY EC-9 AS FALLING OUTSIDE COMMUNITY COMPETENCE.

5. PREPARATION OF EC/ACP MINISTERS' HANDLING OF ITEMS IN PARA 4 HAS, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES HERE, PROVOKED CONSIDERABLE DEBATE IN LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ACP CIRCLES. EC COMMISSIONER FOR DEVELOPMENT CHEYSSON AND FOREIGN MINISTER PATTERSON, DURING DISCUSSIONS HERE IN FEBRUARY, REPORTEDLY STRONGLY FAVORED A RELATIVELY EXTENSIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON SENSITIVE ISSUES (SUCH AS THE COMMON FUND) THAT EC-9 CONSIDER TO BE MATTERS OF NATIONAL, RATHER THAN COMMUNITY, COMPETENCE. AS A RESULT, GROUND RULES FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE MARGIN OF THE MINISTERIAL SESSION (MARCH 14) HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY LAID DOWN BY MEMBER STATES, ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) ON NORTH-SOUTH, IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINE MAY ONLY REITERATE ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY POSITIONS ON DEBT RELIEF, COMMON FUND, COMMODITY ISSUES, ETC. IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM ACP REPS THEY MAY "EXPLAIN" THESE POLICIES, BUT MAY MAKE NO SUBSTANTIVE DEPARTURES FROM THEM.

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(B) LOME II, EC-9 MAY "LISTEN" TO VIEWS OF ACP REPS BUT SINCE THE THE COMMUNITY STILL HAS NO AGREED MANDATE FOR FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS, EC SIDE DOES NOT INTEND TO

ENGAGE IN SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. MORRIS

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